

Inmate's COVID nightmare

Gets vax, tests positive four days later and then dies

BY NOAH GOLDBERG
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The first federal inmate to die of COVID-19 at Brooklyn's federal jail was vaccinated four days before he tested positive for the virus and died of complications, the Daily News has learned.

Edwin Segarra, 46, succumbed to the virus last Friday after being rushed from Metropolitan Detention Center to NYU Langone Hospital-Brooklyn.

"Hey sis, hope all is well with you and the family just took the first shot of the COVID vaccine. 21 days until I can get the next one," Segarra said in a message to his family in January.

But the day before his death, another message showed Segarra's fortunes had changed dramatically.

"Hey sis I tested positive on the 23, 4 day after I took the shot (sic) crazy I was bad for 10 days but I'm

doing better, love you," Segarra wrote in a jailhouse message to his sister, Wendy Sanchez.

Segarra's family now is trying to make sense of the sudden loss of its patriarch, a father of four.

"I'm in shock still," said Segarra's son Eddie Segarra, 28. "I feel like I lost a part of myself. Me and my father were very close. We shared a lot of the same thoughts. We were best friends. That was my best friend for real."

Despite his father being behind bars for much of his son's life, Eddie Segarra credits his dad with driving him to be a correctional officer. He works at a state prison in Florida and drove to New York over the weekend after hearing of his dad's death.

Segarra had been in jail for more than a decade.

He recently pleaded guilty to a slew of charges more than a decade old, including robbery, drug

Edwin Segarra (L), first inmate to die of COVID at Brooklyn fed jail, and son.



conspiracy and causing someone's death during a robbery and narcotics conspiracy.

"We were fighting to get his sentencing moved up," said Lorraine

Gault-Rufo, Segarra's lawyer.

He had turned his life around while in jail, his family and lawyer said.

Segarra was taking numerous

classes at Columbia University through the jail, with one professor saying in a statement that Segarra was "moved by a genuine sense of intellectual curiosity."

He worked as an orderly in the jail and had also converted to Islam in the last year of his life, his son said.

Segarra was part of the jail's first round of vaccinations, which began in late January and included alleged Jeffrey Epstein co-conspirator Ghislaine Maxwell.

"It's frustrating because he wanted to come out and have another chance," said his youngest daughter, Lisa Sanchez, 20. "He was a person full of hopes. Even if he was in a difficult situation, he was just dealing with it the best way he could."

Family members said they planned to join a protest Monday evening about conditions at the Metropolitan Detention Center.